

Dinner with Jesus – 7
The Challenge at the Table
Text: Luke 11:37–44

Church Vision (2026): Strain to Love: Sharing the Table of Christ
Mission: Every Chair Filled, Every Heart Engaged

Introduction: Jesus confronts hypocrisy, even at the table, exposing our need for inward purity over outward show. In one discourse He repeatedly thundered “Woe to you hypocrites!” calling out religious leaders who were obsessed with outward appearance but corrupt inside.

I. Ritual cleansing without reality: (Luke 11:37–41)

A. Pharisees emphasized outward rituals over inward righteousness.

1. Jesus rebukes the external washing that ignores inner sin (v. 39).
2. God desires authentic inner transformation (1 Samuel 16:7; Psalm 51:10; 1 John 1:9).

B. True cleansing starts from the heart and flows outward (Matthew 23:25–26).

Architect – “you don’t use facades on churches to fool people. That’s for carnival side shows.” The outside and the inside must match.

Reflection: *Are we maintaining appearances or pursuing true holiness?*

II. Real righteousness comes from within: (Luke 11:42–44)

After exposing the Pharisees’ outward-focused religion Jesus pronounces a whole series of woes – divine condemnations! (we’ll look at thee)

A. Jesus pronounces woes on the Pharisees for inward corruption.

1. **Woe #1: Misplaced priorities** – they tithed herbs but neglected justice and love (Micah 6:8; Matthew 23:24).
2. **Woe #2: Love of reputation** – they craved honor over humility (Matthew 6:1–6; Luke 14:7–11; James 4:10).
3. **Woe #3: Hidden corruption** – they were like unmarked graves, spiritually contaminating others (Matthew 23:27; Romans 2:23–24).

B. Hypocrisy doesn’t just hurt harm the hypocrite, it harms others!

Swindoll: Hypocrisy is a “*disease of the soul*” that alienates people from God.

Reflection: Religion without relationship is death-dealing. Real faith produces life.

III. Reflections for cultivating real faith:

1. **Embrace heart examination** (2 Corinthians 13:5; Psalm 139:23–24; Psalm 51:10). *Hypocrisy thrives in self-deception!*
2. **Prioritize internal transformation over external conformity** (Matthew 6:4,6; Galatians 5:6). *Spiritual disciplines have value - but never let routine replace the relationship!*
3. **Focus on “weightier matters”** – justice, mercy, and love (Micah 6:8; 1 John 3:17; James 1:27). *Does my life reflect Christ’s Love genuinely?*
4. **Be the same “You” everywhere** – walk in integrity (Romans 2:23–24; Matthew 25:40). *Integrity gives power to our witness!*

“Jesus calls us not just to sit at His table—but to be changed at His table.

To live out a vision of radical love and humility. Let’s commit again today to strain to love—to fill the chairs around us not just with people, but with people who are fully seen, known, and loved in Christ. *That’s the kind of church Jesus blesses.”*

Final Challenge: Let’s commit to inward purity, not just outward appearance. Jesus rebukes not to condemn, but to cleanse. *The pure in heart will see God* (Matt 5:8). Let’s remove the mask and reflect Christ’s love authentically to the world.